Leicester
City Council

Leicester City Council

Carbon Footprint Statement for 2024/25

October 2025

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Executive Summary

Leicester City Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions from its own estate and operations and has set itself an ambition to reach net zero emissions by 2030/31, with Government support.

Each year a carbon footprint is calculated for the council, which presents the greenhouse gas emissions the council is responsible for, expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e). The carbon footprint calculated for the baseline year of 2008/09 was 46,836 tonnes CO_2e and included all scope 1 and scope 2 and some scope 3 emissions. The different emission scopes are explained in the corresponding sections of the report.

At the end of the 2024/25 financial year emissions were 16,379 tCO_2e. This represents:

- a reduction of 30,457 tCO_2e (65%) from the 2008/09 baseline
- an increase of 917 tCO_2e (5.9%) from 2023/24

Further details of the changes in emissions compared to both the 2008/09 baseline year and to 2023/24 are provided in the later sections of the report covering each emissions scope.

Wherever possible the reasons behind changes to the footprint have been provided in this report.

1. Introduction

In February 2019 Leicester City Council became one of the first UK local authorities to declare a Climate Emergency. As part of the council's response to the Climate Emergency an ambition was declared to achieve net zero carbon emissions for the city and the council by 2030. This report presents progress towards this ambition within the council's own operations.

Greenhouse gas emissions from human activity are a key driver of dangerous climate change, which represents a huge risk to both the city of Leicester and to humanity and biodiversity worldwide. The council is committed to play its part in rapidly reducing the emissions from its operations, as well as helping residents and organisations in the city to do the same.

In order to measure progress in reducing its emissions, Leicester City Council monitors emissions from each area of its activities. The emissions are broken down into the three scopes set out by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, which are explained in section 5 of this report. The report sets out the council's carbon footprint for the 2024/25 financial year, and compares them to a baseline year of 2008/09, as well as providing figures for the intervening years.

Leicester City Council is implementing a wide range of actions to reduce its environmental impact and make the city more sustainable. The council adopted a new Climate Ready Leicester Plan in 2024, outlining a wide-ranging programme of action to drive the move towards net zero carbon in the council and city, and to adapt to the changing climate.

Further information and a copy of the plan can be viewed at: https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/environment-and-sustainability/climate-emergency/

2. Company Information

This carbon footprint statement is for Leicester City Council, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ.

Leicester City Council is the unitary authority responsible for providing council services to people and organisations within Leicester, a city of over 350,000 residents. Its responsibilities include education, highways, transport planning, passenger transport, social care, housing, libraries, leisure and recreation, environmental health, waste collection and disposal and planning. Further information about the council can be found on its website here: https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/about-us/

3. Reporting Period

Carbon emissions are measured over the financial year, therefore the period covered in this report is 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

4. Reasons for Change in Emissions

Leicester City Council's operational carbon emissions increased by 999 tCO_2e (5.9%) overall for the 2024/25 financial year. The council's emissions remain significantly lower

than the baseline year of 2008/09, having fallen by 30,368 tCO_2e (65%) in that time. Emissions per full-time equivalent staff member (FTE) have increased in 2024/25 to 3.3 tCO_2e per employee, from 3.1 tCO_2e per employee in 2023/24. Emissions per staff member remain significantly lower than the 2008/09 baseline figure of 7.2 tCO_2e.

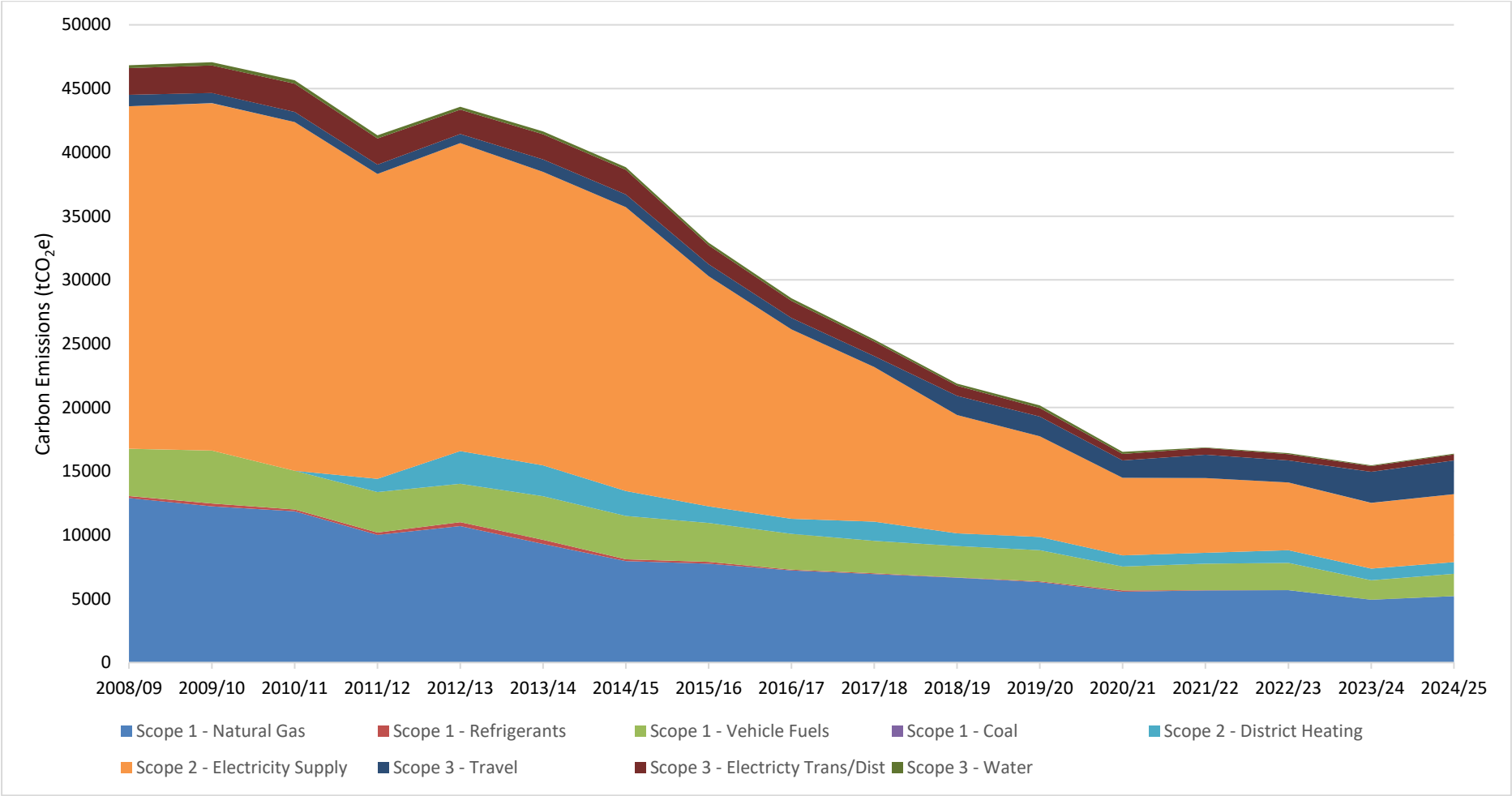
Emissions have fallen in over a third of individual areas monitored but have risen in half with the remainder unchanged. This is a result of different factors affecting each area, and more details of the changes and reasons for them are explained in the relevant sections below. It is also worth noting that, from 2020/21, figures in many of the areas monitored were significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, and a new trend is not yet clear. It should also be taken into account that the carbon conversion factors issued by DESNZ are based on data collected two years prior to the reporting year.

Table 1 below shows an overall summary of emissions from 2008/09 to the current year, including emissions per FTE staff member. Within this report emissions are analysed and discussed under scopes 1, 2 & 3, as set out by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. Graph 1 shows Leicester City Council's overall carbon emissions since 2008/09, split between the main emissions sources within each scope. Details of how these emissions have changed over time, and a more detailed breakdown of each scope is provided below.

Table 1 – Leicester City Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions (tonnes of CO_2e) from 2008/09 to 2024/25

Category	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Total Gross Emissions	46,836	47,067	45,647	41,333	43,585	41,652	38,842	32,917	28,566	25,333	21,862	20,169	16,517	16,867	16,415	15,463	16,379
Carbon Offsets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green Tariffs	Not calculated																0[1]
Net Emissions	**46,836**	**47,067**	**45,647**	**41,333**	**43,585**	**41,652**	**38,842**	**32,917**	**28,566**	**25,333**	**21,862**	**20,169**	**16,517**	**16,867**	**16,415**	**15,463**	**16,379**
Change from 08/09 baseline	n/a	231	-1,189	-5,503	-3,251	-5,184	-7,994	-13,919	-18,270	-21,503	-24,974	-26,667	-30,319	-29,969	-30,421	-31,373	-30,368
Change from 08/09 (%)	n/a	0.5%	-2.5%	-11.7%	-6.9%	-11.1%	-17.1%	-29.7%	-39.0%	-45.9%	-53.3%	-56.9%	-64.7%	-64.0%	-65.0%	-67.0%	-64.8%
Tonnes of CO_2e per FTE	**7.2**	**7.1**	**6.9**	**6.5**	**6.8**	**6.7**	**6.5**	**5.7**	**5.2**	**4.8**	**4.3**	**4.0**	**3.3**	**3.4**	**3.2**	**3.1**	**3.3**

[1] Purchase of green tariff electricity occurred until the end of 2023/24 and was not calculated for inclusion. Purchase of green tariff electricity ceased in 2024/25 and is therefore now reported as '0'.



Graph 1 – Leicester City Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions by scope and source from 2008/09 to 2024/25

5.1 Scope 1 Emissions

Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions, which result from activities owned or controlled by Leicester City Council which release emissions straight into the atmosphere. This includes all of the fuels directly burned in council owned vehicles and boilers, as well as 'fugitive' emissions due to any leaks of refrigerant gases which cause climate change from air-conditioning units and heat pumps. A summary of scope 1 emissions can be seen in Table 2.

Overall scope 1 emissions were 6,963 tCO_2e in 2024/25, an increase of 7.9% (509 tCO_2e) compared to the previous year and a decrease of 58.4% (9,795 tCO_2e) since the baseline year of 2008/09. However, it should be noted that part of the reasons for the increase seen this year relates to monitoring issues for fuel use that occurred in 2023/24, as detailed below.

The largest increase in scope 1 emissions for the year came from the consumption of natural gas in the council's buildings, of 5.8% (285 tCO_2e). This is a result of factors including the acquisition and reopening of buildings, as well as colder weather during the year and other changes to how buildings are used. Looking at the consumption of existing buildings only (excluding new, reopened and closed buildings), there was a small net reduction (-0.2MWh) in total emissions per building. The data therefore suggests that the increase in overall building emissions is due to the net increase in consumption of the additional buildings in 2024/25.

In 2023/24, there appeared to have been a very significant reduction in emissions from fuel use in the council's own vehicle fleet of 28.7% (611 tCO_2e). However, this apparent reduction was due to an issue with the monitoring system used to provide details of fuel consumption, meaning full data for the year was not available. It was noted in last year's report that it was expected that reported emissions from this area would increase significantly in 2024/25 assuming the issues with the fuel monitoring system were resolved, and the increase of 14.8% in 2024/25 has confirmed this. The 2024/25 figure is below the 2022/23 figure, suggesting an underlying trend of a reduction.

It should be noted that where some initial fleet electrification took place this happened prior to the 2024/25 reporting year and therefore it is reasonable to assume that the expected actual figure for 2023/24 would have been similar to 2024/25.

Fugitive emissions from refrigerants in the air conditioning systems remains low and unchanged.

Emissions from coal consumption showed a very small increase of 0.1% as a direct result of a small change in the relevant emissions factor, as the amount of coal purchased remained the same for the year. This coal is purchased for use in a fireplace at a historic property and for a small train at a visitor attraction, and these emissions remain a tiny part of the council’s footprint.

Table 2 – Scope 1 Emissions (tonnes of CO_2e)

Category	Area	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Fuels	Natural Gas	12,905	12,239	11,854	10,008	10,692	9,307	7,963	7,748	7,217	6,940	6,657	6,307	5,564	5,656	5,671	4,927	5,212
	Coal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	4	4
Owned Vehicles	Vehicle Fleet	3,703	4,156	3,029	3,190	3,002	3,422	3,405	3,049	2,813	2,551	2,480	2,437	1,866	2,068	2,131	1,519	1,744
Fugitive Emissions	Air-Con	150	233	148	176	314	309	135	147	61	52	8	63	92	19	6	4	4
	Total	**16,758**	**16,629**	**15,032**	**13,374**	**14,007**	**13,038**	**11,503**	**10,944**	**10,090**	**9,543**	**9,146**	**8,807**	**7,522**	**7,746**	**7,811**	**6,454**	**6,963**

5.2 Scope 2 Emissions

Scope 2 emissions are those resulting from the council's consumption of purchased electricity and heat. These emissions are a result of the council's activities, but they occur at sources not owned or controlled by the council. This includes emissions from generation of the electricity that the council purchases, including for street lighting and traffic signalling and those created in generating the heat provided through the local district heating scheme. This is a network of insulated piping that delivers heat from central boilers and CHP units to buildings around the city. A summary of scope 2 emissions can be seen in Table 3.

Scope 2 emissions increased by 2.8% (167.2 tCO_2e) in the 2024/25 financial year and have fallen by 76.8% (20,622 tCO_2e) since the baseline year of 2008/09. This small annual increase was in part due to a 0.2% increase in the carbon intensity of UK electricity generation. This is a result of an increase in the use of gas for electricity generation and a fall in the amount of renewable energy generated in the year used by DESNZ to calculate the carbon conversion factor (2022).

There was an increase in emissions from electricity use within council buildings of 2.7% (91.7 tCO_2e), Electricity consumption for council buildings rose by 2.7% for the year, with factors including the acquisition and reopening of buildings, increased accuracy in electricity metering with corresponding adjustments made in 2024/25 to account for a shortfall in 2023/24, and potentially the return of staff to office working that could not be mitigated by the ongoing programme of energy efficiency improvements, the installation of solar panels and changes at specific sites, including the closure of some buildings. It is worth noting that the source data for home working is significantly less robust than for some other factors and whilst it may appear that the change is significant, using this as an explanation for the increase in electricity consumption in council buildings should be treated with caution and is included more as a point of interest than a strongly evidenced cause.

Emissions from street lighting showed an increase of 7.5% (106 tCO_2e). Following a cyber-attack on council IT systems in March 2024, remote fa50ult monitoring was unavailable, and street lighting remained on as a safety default. Consumption

remained higher for 10 months until it returned to the long-term trend of monthly reductions from February 2025.Traffic signalling showed a decrease in scope 2 emissions for 2023/24, falling by 6.2% (19 tCO_2e). This is a result of the reduction in energy use due to ongoing work to replace older traffic signals with LEDs.

Emissions from use of the district heating system fell for the second year in a row by 1.3% (11.9 tCO_2e). Council sites are spread across three different parts of the local heat network, with different factors affecting these groupings, including the statuses of the energy centres supplying heat to the network. The main grouping experienced a small decrease in consumption. A second group of sites saw a small increase in consumption. The final site on the third part of the network appears to have experienced a significant decrease in consumption. 2023/24 showed a significant increase, the reason for which could not be confirmed and therefore could be considered an anomalous result that has now normalised in 24/25, exhibiting as an apparent increase.

Table 3 – Scope 2 Emissions (tonnes of CO_2e)

Category	Area	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Purchased Heat	District Heating	0	0	0	1,038	2,570	2,421	1,946	1,303	1,175	1,503	981	1,048	874	853	993	916	904
Purchased Electricity	Buildings	15,310	15,770	16,380	13,833	13,999	13,565	13,483	11,734	9,891	8,093	6,264	5,204	3,765	3,864	3,500	3452	3,544
	Street Lighting	10,148	10,013	9,521	8,665	8,723	8,055	7,317	5,034	4,009	3,269	2,415	2,178	1,894	1,636	1,492	1,407	1,512
	Traffic Signals	1,399	1,438	1,452	1,399	1,421	1,398	1,447	1,276	952	766	605	511	435	366	314	294	276
	Total	**26,858**	**27,221**	**27,353**	**24,935**	**26,712**	**25,438**	**24,192**	**19,346**	**16,028**	**13,631**	**10,265**	**8,941**	**6,968**	**6,719**	**6,300**	**6,068**	**6,236**

5.3 Scope 3 Emissions

Scope 3 emissions are indirect emissions, those that occur due to the council's activities but do not take place at sources under its ownership or control, and do not come under scope 2. This includes emissions from transport activities (including use of 'grey fleet'[2] vehicles and business travel by staff), water consumption (from the energy used to provide and treat water used in council buildings) and from energy lost though the distribution of electricity through the national grid. A summary of scope 3 emissions can be seen in Table 4.

Scope 3 emissions have increased this year, by 8.2% (240 tCO_2e), but remain lower by 1.2% than in 2008/09. It should be noted that emissions from passenger transport[3] were added to the footprint from 2018/19 onwards and make up 70% of scope 3 emissions in 2024/25. Excluding passenger transport shows a comparable 71% reduction in emissions from the 2008/09 baseline.

Emissions from the 'grey fleet' (employees using their own vehicles for work travel) fell by 5.7% (18 tCO_2e). This may be a result of a continued return to normal business following pandemic restrictions and changes in service delivery.

For emissions from the transmission and distribution of electricity there was a 4.9% (14.6 tCO_2e) increase for council buildings. As for the scope 2 emissions this reflects an increase in consumption from an apparent increase in the use of council buildings by staff. Emissions from street lighting increased by 9.8% (12 tCO_2e) and traffic signalling fell by 4.2% (1 tCO_2e). As with the scope 2 emissions from traffic signalling, this is due to a fall in electricity consumption.

There has been an increase in emissions from business travel[4] by council staff of 22.3% (22.1 tCO_2e). This is a result of increased spend on travel, used as a proxy

[2] Grey Fleet refers to employees using their own vehicles to carry out their work, for which they are reimbursed by the council.
[3] Passenger transport refers to bus, coach, taxi, train and air use, with bus and coach use categorised together, for service users requiring service access travel support.
[4] Business travel refers to bus, coach, taxi, train and air use, with bus and coach use categorised together, for council employees requiring use of public transport to carry out their duties.

for emissions, and is reflects a combination of increased costs for transport (+4.6% on rail fares and +50% bus cap[5]), alongside changes in service delivery.

Emissions from the provision of passenger transport for service users have increased significantly by 11% (216 tCO_2e). This is partly a result of a very significant increase (8% in price per km for passenger taxis) in the cost to the council of providing these services, and cost is used as a proxy for calculating emissions. The remaining 3% of the increase not directly caused by increase in taxi price suggests a small increase in service use on top of the significant inflationary pressures in the sector.

Emissions have fallen by 18% (5.1 tCO_2e), from water supply and treatment (specifically from the energy required for these processes). This is partly as a result of a 9.3% fall in the related emissions factor and it should be noted that, as estimated billing is used, consumption figures do fluctuate year on year, although the long-term trend does show a clear decrease from the baseline.

Data is not currently collected for emissions from staff commuting to work or emissions from services commissioned through outsourced contracts (except for passenger transport), from the manufacture or transport of purchased goods and materials or from waste disposal.

An estimate of the council's emissions from staff home working has been developed but is not included in the overall figures at this time due to uncertainties in the calculation. According to this estimate, home working is responsible for 999 tCO_2e in 2024/25, a 29% reduction on 2023/24. This is a result of a drop in remote logins[6] to the council system, which may reflect changes to working patterns, as well as a small reduction in the number of FTE staff.

[5] Figures from 2024 Labour Government Budget

[6] Remote logins refers to members of staff who have logged on to the council IT system through an external connection rather than by direct access through a council network connection point.

Table 4 – Scope 3 Emissions (tonnes of CO_2e)

Category	Area	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Transport Related	Grey Fleet Travel	825	775	737	677	653	651	541	515	531	401	394	417	191	288	308	324	306
	Business Travel	69	38	54	61	74	322	457	418	359	447	44	30	17	94	90	99	121
	Passenger Transport[7]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,068	1,091	1,143	1,451	1,342	2,013	2,229
Purchased Electricity - T&D[8]	Buildings	1,190	1,249	1,319	1,182	1,106	1,160	1,179	969	895	757	534	442	324	342	320	299	313
	Street Lighting	789	793	767	740	689	689	640	416	363	306	206	185	163	145	136	122	134
	Traffic Signals	109	114	117	120	112	119	127	105	86	72	52	43	37	32	29	25	24
Water	Supply	68	82	87	80	75	76	67	67	70	58	50	69	50	18	28	27	24
	Treatment	170	168	180	164	155	157	137	138	145	119	104	143	102	32	50	31	29
	Total	**3,220**	**3,217**	**3,262**	**3,024**	**2,865**	**3,175**	**3,147**	**2,627**	**2,447**	**2,159**	**2,451**	**2,421**	**2,027**	**2,402**	**2,304**	**2,940**	**3,181**

[7] Emissions not previously calculated until 2018/19
[8] T&D stands for Transmission & Distribution.

5. Reporting Methodology

The report follows the Environmental Reporting Guidelines provided by the UK government on voluntary carbon emission reporting for organisations under Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting (SECR).

Further details are available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-reporting-guidelines-including-mandatory-greenhouse-gas-emissions-reporting-guidance

Leicester City Council previously reported under the UK government's Emissions Reduction Pledge 2020, developed specifically for public sector organisations. This programme has now concluded, and as yet no replacement guidance on targets and reporting has been provided for the public sector specifically.

The 2024/25 figures in this report were calculated using the UK government's published greenhouse gas conversion factors for 2024. These are provided by the Department for Energy, Sustainability & Net Zero (DESNZ), are calculated using data from 2022 and are available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2024

6. Organisational Boundary and Operational Scope

This report covers emissions produced from Leicester City Council's operations, including:

- Scope 1 emissions from building heating, fuel use and air-conditioning.
- Scope 2 emissions from purchased electricity for buildings and street lighting and purchased heat.
- Scope 3 emissions from business milage and passenger transport, electricity transmission and distribution and water consumption.

This report excludes emissions from outsourced and contracted services (except passenger transport), waste disposal and consumption of goods and materials due to the cost and complexity of data collection or lack of availability. This report also does not

cover emissions from schools in the city, or from tenanted housing and commercial properties where the council is the landlord[9].

7. Baseline Year

Leicester City Council's carbon footprint reporting baseline year is the 2008/2009 financial year, which is the first year for which detailed greenhouse gas emission figures are available.

8. Targets & Responsibility

Following Leicester City Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, an ambition was declared to achieve net zero carbon for the city and the council by 2030, with Government support.

Leicester's Assistant City Mayor for Environment and Transport, Cllr Geoff Whittle, has overall responsibility for sustainability action within the council. This report is produced by the council's Sustainability Service, which leads on the climate emergency response within the city council.

9. Intensity Measurement

The council has chosen an intensity ratio based on the number of full-time equivalent staff. This is because the number of staff gives the best indication of the scale of operational activity of the organisation. The intensity measure is reported in Table 1.

10. External Assurance

The data reported in this document is not subject to external verification.

11. Carbon Offsets

Carbon offsets allow organisations to pay for projects to be carried out that reduce carbon emissions outside their organisational boundary, as an alternative to reducing their own carbon emissions.

[9] Except buildings or areas where the council is responsible for the energy bills, such as communal areas in blocks of flats and business centres, managed workspaces and warden assisted accommodation.

Leicester City Council is committed to reducing its own emissions as far as possible, as purchasing carbon offsets will not prevent us needing to make these reductions in the long term. Therefore, until we have reached a satisfactory level of reductions, purchase of carbon offsets will not be considered by the council.

12. Electricity & Heat

- Gas purchased for our own consumption: 28,494 MWh
- Electricity purchased for our own consumption: 25,752 MWh
- Renewable electricity generated from owned or controlled sources: 1,539 MWh[10]

Exports of electricity to the grid from owned or controlled sources are not metered separately.

No metered heat was generated at council owned or controlled sources in 2024/25. A number of council buildings are connected to a district heat network, controlled by an external provider, and carbon emissions data for this is included under Scope 2.

13. Green Tariffs

Leicester City Council does not purchase electricity from 'green tariff' 100% renewable sources. Instead, our approach is to focus any investment towards reducing our energy demand, replacing fossil fuel heating with electric technologies and increasing our own renewable generation.

14. Contact

This report was prepared by Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, on behalf of Leicester City Council.

For further information about Leicester City Council's sustainability actions, please visit: https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/environment-and-sustainability/climate-emergency/

If you wish to contact us, please email: sustainability@leicester.gov.uk

[10] This figure is an estimate, based upon the total installed capacity of solar PV arrays at council buildings.